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Friends of Michigan History, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Michigan Historical Museum

Lansing, Michigan

March 9, 2009

Call to Order

President Bus Spaniola called the of the Board of Directors (Board) meeting of the Friends of Michigan History, Inc. (Friends) to order at 10:35 A.M.

Board Members Present: Larry Griffin, Keith Harrison, Rose Moye, Bus Spaniola, Charles Seeley, Paul Tarr, Tom Truscott, Ralph Sims, Louise Stilwill, and Geneva Kebler Wiskemann.

Board Members Absent: David Brickey, Adriana Greci Green, John Irwin, Richard Johnson, Morris Thomas, and Bill Wellman.

Board Members Excused: Adriana Greci Green, John Irwin, Morris Thomas, Richard Johnson, and Bill Wellman.

Michigan Historical Museum (Museum) Staff Present: Chris Dancisak.

Guests Present: None.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented; motion passed.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve as transmitted the minutes from the February 2009 Board meeting; motion passed.

President's Report

The President's report period was used to discuss the current situation regarding the Governor's FY 2010 budget that eliminates the Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) and results in the dissolution and disassociation of the various professional groups within the Michigan Historical Center. Secretary Harrison passed out the statement made on behalf of the Friends at a Senate Hearing chaired by Senator Tom George. The position of the statement was that the Friends recognizes the economic situation and the fact the HAL will most likely be eliminated but advocated for keeping the Michigan Historical Center together as a unit in the eventual reorganization. Secretary Harrison indicated that this is the same position of the Michigan History Foundation (Foundation) and was the same position expressed by the other organizations that spoke at the hearing. Vice President Tom Truscott provided an overview of what he presented at the hearing and also provided a handout of the most recent position statement from the Michigan Historical Commission. There was expressed by all of a need of the various history stakeholders (e.g., Friends, Foundation, Michigan Historical

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Commission, etc) to join forces rather than approaching this and other problems always from an independent standpoint.

Larry Griffin indicated that the state's history department never really took a proactive stance with the Legislature. It always has been reactive. He stated that we need to talk to all the legislators and tell them of our concerns.

President Spaniola indicated that there are several rumors floating around that discuss possible alternative resolutions to the HAL breakup. One of them involves the possibility of the Michigan Historical Center being taken over by Michigan State University.

A motion was made and seconded to send a letter to the Governor and the Legislature indicating the Friends' concern about the potential breakup and dispersal of the Michigan Historical Center and its professional groups, but also our willingness to be a partner with other stakeholder organizations to help come up with a more positive solution that would keep the Michigan Historical Center together; motion passed.

President Spaniola also reported on the program to pay honor and tribute to E.E. Myer, architect of the Michigan State Capital and nationally recognized as one of the greatest architect of the Gilded Age. He indicated that it was a nice gathering of a number of speakers including one from the state capital in Denver, Colorado and one from Tifton, Ohio. The Friends was thanked for its contribution.

Treasurer Report

Note -The Treasurer's report was not provided electronically to the Secretary; therefore, it does not appear in these meeting minutes.

A motion was made and seconded to approve, as transmitted, the Treasurer's report for the period February 1 – February 28, 2009; motion passed.

Presentation of Bills

No Bills presented.

Museum Report

Chris Dancisak passed out two new brochures. The first was titled *Exploring Michigan's Past*. The second was titled *Michigan's Roadside Attractions*. Both will be made available at Michigan Welcome Centers and other rest stops within Michigan. Both brochures were done in collaboration with Booth Michigan. These also will run in the Booth Newspapers. He also passed out a couple a newspaper articles dealing with the *Michigan Historical Center's* Music at the Museum programs (Lansing State Journal) and with young school age kids coming to the museum.

Committee Reports

A. 2009 Veterans Day Program Committee (Paul Tarr and Larry Griffin – Co chairs): Paul Tarr indicated that he was still looking for a speaker for the program and that he was would take suggestions.

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B. *Membership Committee (Keith Harrison – Chair)*. No report.

C. *Board Nominating Committee (Charles Seeley and Tom Truscott)*. No report.

D. *Magazine/Military Committee (Paul Tarr – Chair)*. Paul Tarr indicated that he still has not picked up the magazines.

E. *Grants Committee (Adriana Greci Green - Chair)*. No report.

F. *Newsletter Committee (Paul Tarr and Bill Wellman, Co-chairs)*. The next newsletter is scheduled to go out in April. President Spaniola indicated that he would get the Representative that has introduced the license bill to put something together. There was expressed the need to have something in about the Collette Travel and, in particular, about the upcoming Friends' sponsored trip. A suggestion was made to put in as an insert a flier about Collette Travel. It was indicated that the Collette flier and information about the upcoming trip be made available to Chris as both a hard copy and as an electronic copy (pdf). President Spaniola indicated that he would arranged for this to happen. Finally, it was mentioned that the letter to the Governor regarding the elimination of the HAL be put into the newsletter. Secretary Harrison indicated that he would take care of this issue.

G. *Fund Raising Committee (Bus Spaniola - Chair)*. No report.

H. *Calendar (2010) Committee (Tom Truscott & Rose Moye, Co-chairs)*. Rose Moye indicated that they are going to focus on doing a 2010 calendar that would show important Civil War dates.

I. *Legislative Reception Committee (Paul Tarr – Chair)* – It was indicated that the Friends would hold a legislative reception on either April 21 or April 22 during the evening (the evening appeared to be the best for Museum since it would be easier to coordinate the use of the facility and also deal with the food). It was indicated that the Friends also would invite the Michigan Historical Commission, the Docent, and the Michigan History Foundation. Special emphasis would be made to invite the Legislative Heritage Caucus.

A motion was made and seconded to make available up to \$500 to hold the Legislative reception; motion passed.

Old Business

A. *License Plates*. President Spaniola indicated that the bill has been introduced by Representative Mike Huckelberry from Greenville.

B. *IRS Group Exemption Application Status*. There has been no notification regarding the Friends' letter application to the Internal Revenue Service for a Group Exemption Number.

C. *Archives*. No report.

D. *Telephonic Board Attendance*. Nothing has changed since the last meeting. The Board's current meeting location on the 1st floor of the Museum does not have telephonic capability.

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New Business

A motion was made and seconded to become an organizational member of the Historic Fort Wayne Coalition – cost \$75.00 per year; motion passed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 AM.

Respectively submitted,

Keith G. Harrison

Keith G. Harrison, Secretary

Board of Directors

Friends of Michigan History, Inc.

The next Board meeting will be Monday, April 13, 2009, in Lansing.